

# Insight into High-Rise Building Residents

## Research Summary

- Insight and Service Design Team, Health and Safety Executive
- Research conducted by Kantar Public and BMG Research

**September 2023**





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# Introduction

## Overview

This report brings together the findings on residents' views, attitudes and behaviours relating to high-rise building safety from two research studies:

- Qualitative research conducted by Kantar Public with a pilot phase running from 1 November 2021 to 19 November 2021 and the main stage data collection taking place from 7 March 2022 to 13 April 2022.
- Quantitative survey research conducted by BMG Research with a pilot phase running from 26 November 2021 to 5 January 2022 and the main stage data collection from 19 February 2022 to 13 April 2022.

The research was managed by the Insight and Service Design Team at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

These studies have been undertaken to ensure that residents' perspectives are central to the development of the new Building Safety Regulator (BSR). Both studies aimed to ensure that residents' needs and views were considered by providing data directly from residents; to use the findings to optimise policy, services and communications to successfully interact with residents. They also aimed to provide baseline data prior to the launch of the regulator by delivering measures across a range of relevant topics such as feeling of safety, knowledge and understanding of building safety and satisfaction.

Alongside these studies, BSR is working to reflect residents' perspectives in its development in a variety of ways, including a Statutory Residents Panel; engagement with representative bodies of the industry; and a programme of digital user research. Further research projects into the specific needs of residents with disabilities and residents with low proficiency in English language have also been conducted.

The content of the report, including any opinions and/or conclusions expressed, are the views of the research agencies alone and do not necessarily represent the views or policy of HSE.

## Context

In response to the Building a Safer Future Report (the Hackitt Review), which was commissioned following the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) (formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities and

Local Government) asked HSE to establish a new, independent Building Safety Regulator, coming into force in 2023 to ensure the safe design, construction and occupation of high-rise buildings (HRBs).

The new Building Safety Regulator aims to ensure that residents are safe and feel safe in their homes.

Under the new regulatory regime, there will be a Principal Accountable Person (PAP) for each high-rise building. The PAP will be responsible for engaging with and informing residents of building safety matters, among other new requirements they will need to meet, when managing the safety of their buildings. This will give residents access to more information about the safety of their building with effective routes to seek resolution, including escalating building safety issues to BSR. The new safety measures also envisage residents playing a more active role in ensuring building safety and complying with a new set of responsibilities themselves.

The research presented in this report has been designed to be representative of all HRB residents. It provides contextual understanding of residents' issues and concerns, their interactions with building safety stakeholders and their views on the development of BSR. Findings are being used to inform policy, operations and communications relating to the new regulator.

## Research Methods

This research took a mixed methods approach, combining the findings from the following studies:

- a quantitative research study which included a representative survey among the residents of high-rise buildings in England
- a qualitative research study which included one-to-one in-depth interviews and small group discussions, each comprising 2-3 residents

A summary of the methods used in each of these studies is provided below. More detailed information on the research methods can be found in the “Insight into High-Rise Building Residents Technical Report”.

### Quantitative research

The quantitative research comprised a survey issued to a random probability sample of HRB households in England. The sample was drawn from DLUHC’s Tall Buildings Dataset and was stratified, to be representative of HRB households in terms of building tenure (whether privately managed, socially managed or student accommodation), building size (number of addresses in a building), region and index of multiple deprivation (IMD) decile.

Households included in the research sample were contacted by post, receiving a written invitation explaining the purpose of the survey and how to take part. An insert provided information about the survey in 18 additional languages. Households received a paper questionnaire, with the added options of taking part online, or by phone. Invitation packs were posted to 62,000 (total of pilot and main stage) high-rise dwellings across England. The survey achieved a total of 9,684 responses (6,198 postal, 3,454 online and 32 telephone completes) equating to a response rate of 16%.

Two versions of the questionnaires were designed and each household was randomly issued one of these. This provided the opportunity to ask a larger number of questions without extending the survey completion time over 15 minutes. Participants were able to leave any question blank in the postal version or skip any question in the online version. As such, in the report there are differences in the number of responses reported. Questionnaires and survey invitation materials were tested with 15 residents during a cognitive testing phase in November 2021.

Final survey data were weighted to make them representative in terms of region, IMD and building tenure.

Figures shown in the tables and charts may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Survey findings included in this report are subject to confidence intervals, as they are based on answers from a sample of the population<sup>1</sup>. Without surveying every HRB household in England, we cannot get completely precise survey results – confidence intervals give an estimate of how confident we can be about the results gathered from a sample of this population. Here, we have provided a 95% confidence interval which means that if we carried out the survey over and over again with different samples, the true population value would fall within that range 95% of the time.

The survey was conducted using two questionnaires (questionnaire A and questionnaire B), with core questions appearing in both versions, and some questions appearing in version A or B only.

- The maximum confidence interval observed for a core question (questions which appear in both questionnaire A and questionnaire B) is +/- 1.47 percentage points.
- The maximum confidence interval for questions appearing in questionnaire B only is +/- 2.48 percentage points.
- For questions appearing in questionnaire A only, the maximum confidence interval was +/- 2.21 percentage points with the following exceptions due to lower sample size as a result of being routed from other questions:
  - A10: Whether residents reported any of the fire safety issues to their landlord/letting agent or building management organisation: A maximum confidence interval of +/- 3.51 percentage points
  - A12: Whether residents reported any of the structural safety issues to their landlord/letting agent or building management organisation: A maximum confidence interval of +/- 5.12 percentage points

## Qualitative research

Qualitative research comprised one-to-one in-depth interviews and small discussion groups (2-3 residents) with residents of high-rise buildings across England, gathering data from 169 participants.

The sample was sourced through free-find routes for the pilot phase. For the main stage, the sample was drawn from survey participants who expressed an interest in taking part in further research. The sample was designed to ensure a spread of regions, building tenure, flat tenure, building height, presence of flammable cladding (reported by residents), household income, digital ability, disability status and ethnicity.

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<sup>1</sup> A confidence interval is a statistically estimated range of values that a calculated result may fall within.

Interviews and group discussions took up to 90 minutes and were conducted online. A telephone option was offered for those who were not able to take part online. Discussions were conducted using a semi-structured topic guide, alongside stimulus for certain subject areas.

# Findings

## Resident demographics and tenure

The qualitative research found that high-rise residents were a diverse population, living in different types of buildings, under different ownership and management structures. Residents were diverse in terms of the nature of their housing tenure, age, income, employment situation, educational background, health, ethnicity, English language and digital skills. High-rise buildings varied widely in terms of location, height, management structures and whether they had perceived issues associated with flammable cladding. There was also wide variation in the ownership and management structures of high-rise buildings, depending on whether they were privately or publicly owned, and whether management was delivered directly by the owner or by a third-party organisation. Within this varied context, the relationships between residents and building management organisations were fundamental to determining resident experiences.

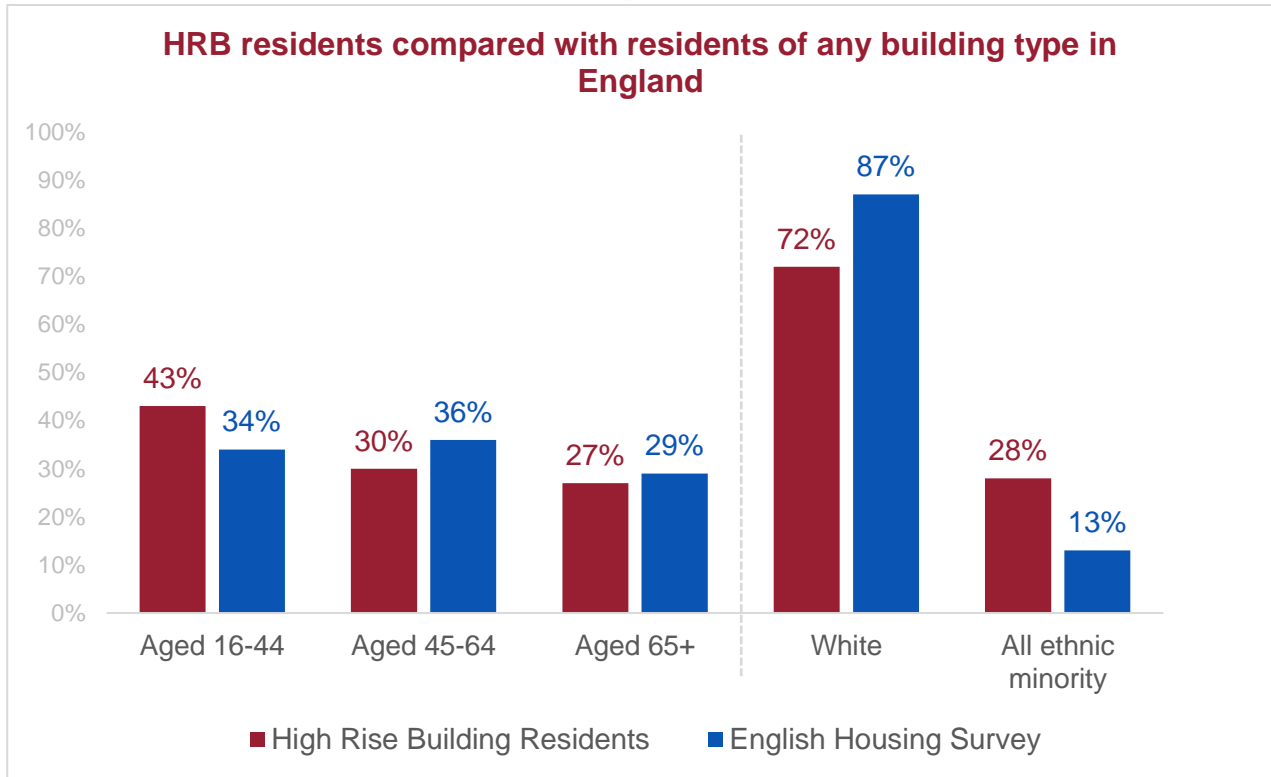
Some differences between HRB residents and the general population were observed in the survey data. When compared with figures from the English Housing Survey<sup>2</sup> (EHS - a survey of households from all building types), high-rise residents were likely to be younger (43% vs 34% in EHS aged 16-44; 30% vs 36% aged 45-64; 27% vs. 29% aged 65+) and more ethnically diverse (28% vs 13% in EHS classify themselves as being from an ethnic minority background). Further, two thirds of those living in high-rise buildings spoke English as a first language. And one-third of high-rise residents lived in buildings located in deprived areas<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> [Demographic and economic characteristics, 2021-22 English Housing Survey \(EHS\) Headline Report. This well-known source is cited to](#) provide *indicative* contextual comparisons between the two populations. It should be noted, however, that there are methodological differences. The EHS used a face-to-face data collection methodology whereas the High-rise buildings' residents survey was largely undertaken via post or online. Definition of some categories/groups may also not be like-for-like.

<sup>3</sup> Most deprived based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Figure 1: Comparing the profile of the high-rise building residents taking part in the survey to the head of household in all homes in England<sup>4</sup>

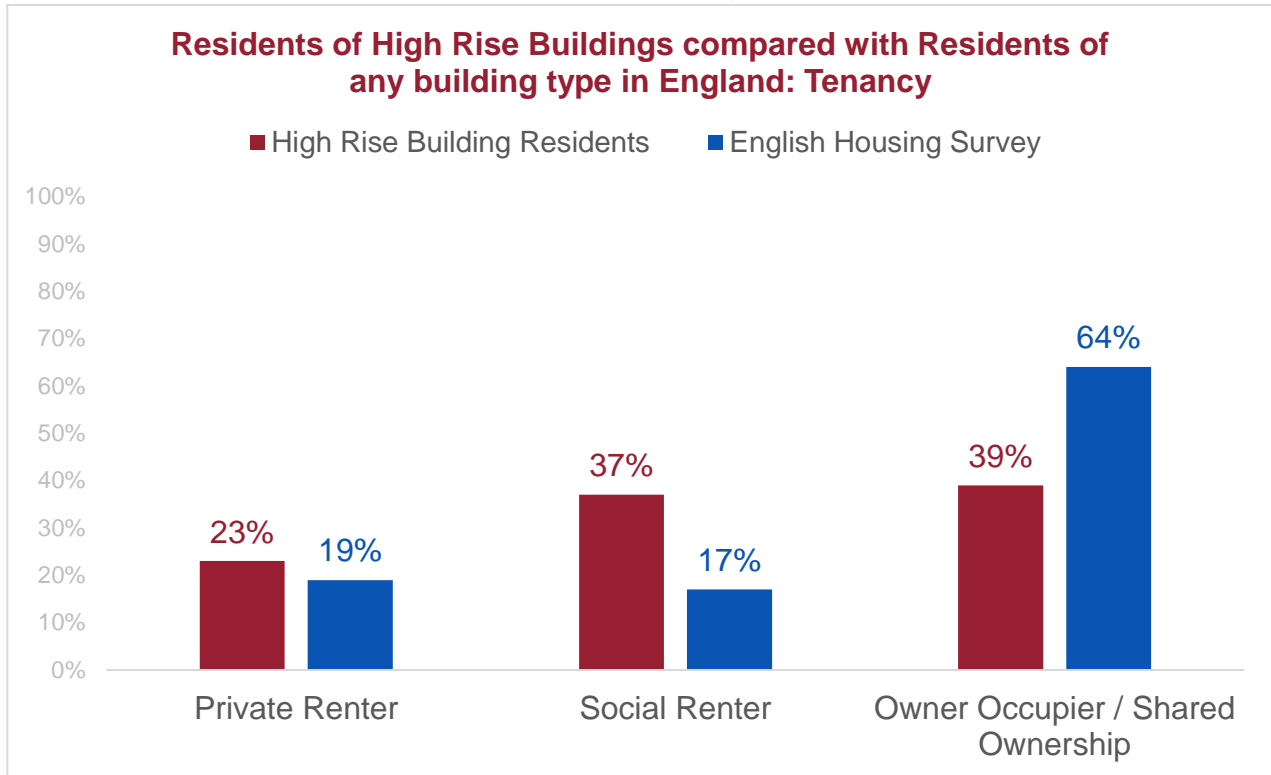


Data analysis revealed marked differences by building tenure in respondent characteristics. Compared to residents living in privately managed buildings, residents in social tenure buildings were significantly more likely to: have lower incomes and educational qualifications, live in deprived areas, be older, have a health condition and be less proficient in English. Conversely, residents living in private tenure buildings were more likely to have higher incomes, be younger, have higher levels of education, be employed, live in less deprived areas, not have a health condition and speak English as a first language.

Within sample, a mixture of resident tenures was reported. Overall, 37% of respondents reported renting from a council or housing association; 39% owning their own home (including 5% shared ownership); and 23% renting from a private landlord.

<sup>4</sup> What is your age? (n = 9,524); How would you describe your ethnicity? (n = 9,378) How many people live in your home at the moment? Number of children (under 16) (n = 9,684).

Figure 2: Comparing tenancy types of the high-rise building residents taking part in the survey to the head of household in all homes in England<sup>5</sup>



The qualitative research highlighted the effect of ownership and management structures across both public and private sector buildings on residents' experience and engagement with their buildings. Differential experience was determined by the extent to which a freeholder retained ownership over individual flats or sold these on to leaseholders; the involvement or not of letting agents in rental agreements; and the extent to which building management was outsourced to a separate management organisation. This meant that residents' points of contact for building matters, and the quality of service received, differed depending on building ownership, resident tenure status and the management model in use.

Residents reflected on a range of positive and negative factors when asked about their experience of living in high-rise buildings during qualitative interviews. Positive aspects included a feeling of security, convenience of maintenance and amenities, building location, the space their home offered compared with alternatives and the view from the building. Negatives included poor management of building issues, proximity to neighbours who could be inconsiderate, service charges, parking and accessibility.

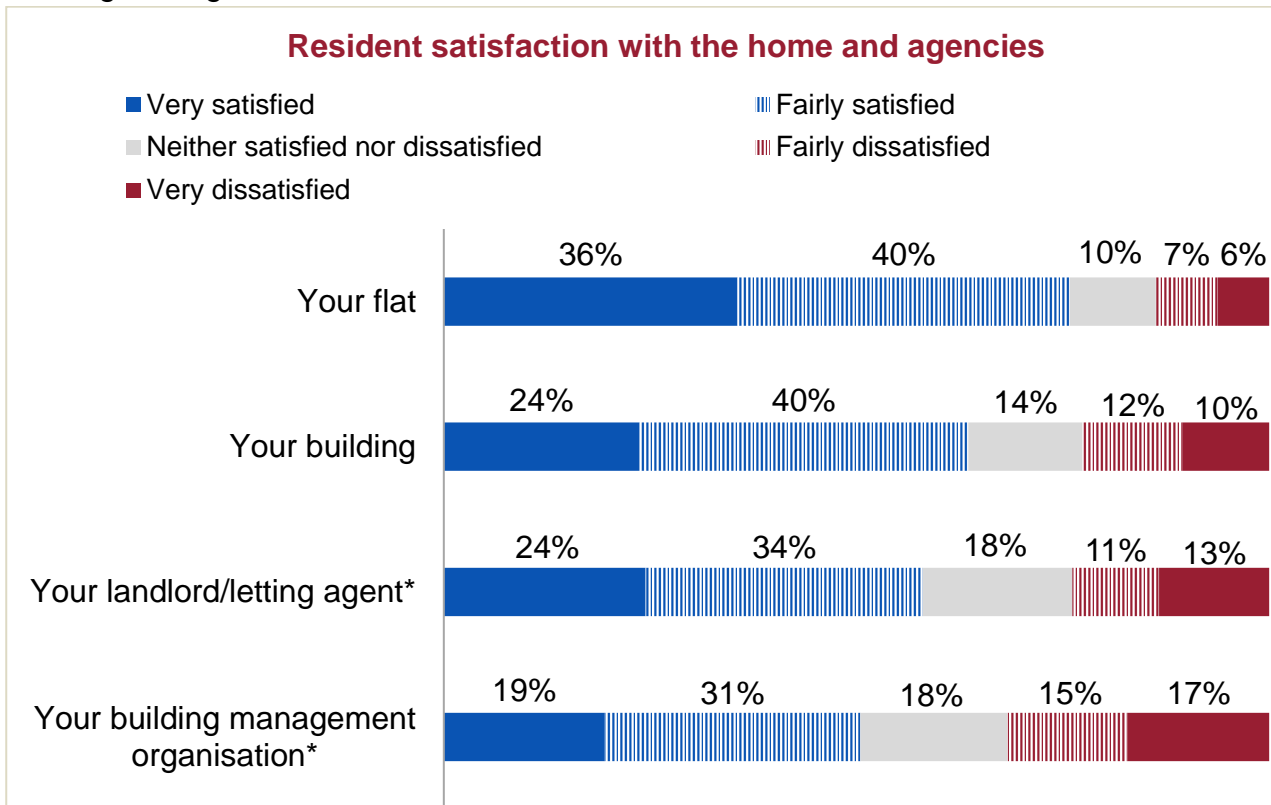
Qualitative discussions showed that, it was common for residents to report a limited sense of community or familiarity with neighbours within their building. Most residents did not have significant relationships with others in their building and there was limited

<sup>5</sup> Do you own or rent your home? (n = 9,631).

participation in residents’ organisations. Owner-occupiers and long-term social tenants were somewhat more likely to be engaged with others in their building.

Although the survey found that most residents were satisfied with their flat (76% very or fairly satisfied) and building (64%), fewer were satisfied with their landlord or letting agent (58%) or building management company (50%). Reasons for dissatisfaction with building management mentioned in the qualitative study included poor communication, lack of transparency or information, lack of responsiveness or timeliness in response to issues, and service charges and fees.

Figure 3: Resident satisfaction with their flat, building, landlord or letting agent and their building management<sup>6</sup>



The qualitative findings demonstrated that residents’ experiences of high-rise living were influenced by a broad set of factors, which in turn shaped perceptions of building safety issues, residents’ engagement with their building, and their perspectives on the Building Safety Regulator. These were classified into two broad groups: systemic factors and individual factors.

<sup>6</sup> All things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following? \*Excluding those who said ‘not applicable’. Base sizes: Your flat (n = 4,763), Your building (n = 4,614), Your landlord/letting agent (\*excluding those who said ‘not applicable’, n = 3,581), Your building management organisation (\*excluding those who said ‘not applicable’, n = 4,380).

Systemic factors were differences at the building level, affecting the context in which issues were experienced. These included:

- Building management model
- Age or quality of the building
- Costs / fees charged to residents (and their perceived value)
- Quality of communication with residents
- Systems of accountability in place
- Specific responses to issues related to cladding

Individual factors were differences at the individual level, affecting resident responses to issues. These included:

- Ownership status
- Previous experience of building safety issues
- Self-efficacy (the extent to which residents felt able to respond to issues)
- Response efficacy (expectations about the results of reporting an issue)
- Age and life stage
- Length of residency in a building
- Conscientiousness
- Risk perceptions

Some individual factors were related to or even caused by systemic factors. Tenure was the key factor underlying experiences, as this linked both systemic and individual level factors.

The qualitative study revealed five distinct types of residents with similar experiences of building safety, shaped by their tenure, and the previously described individual and systemic factors.

These types were:

1. **Social Renters:** A less affluent group of residents who have typically had longer-term residency. This group could be further broken down into those who were satisfied with their building and its management, and those who were not.
2. **Private Renters:** Generally, either dissatisfied or neutral about the service they received in their building, and likely to move home. This group could be further delineated by those living in newer high-rises with build-to-rent management, and those renting from individual leaseholders, typically in older buildings.
3. **Owners: Privately Managed:** More affluent than renters, living in a range of buildings, often older. They were more likely to report that building management were unresponsive or inaccessible.

4. **Owners: Managed by social landlords:** This group included those who had purchased flats within buildings managed by social landlords and those in shared ownership arrangements. The buildings they lived in were typically newer. This group often had high expectations of their building managers.
5. **Owners: with self-reported cladding issues:** Tended to be more affluent than renters and lived in a range of buildings. They reported having cladding on their building which they believed to be flammable, and many were concerned about this. This group was often in conflict with building management about resolving cladding issues<sup>7</sup>. Although some residents with other tenures experienced issues with cladding, this was not as central to their experience as for owner occupiers.

These types, derived from the qualitative data, were then mapped to the survey data to provide indicative proportions of each type as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Proportion of sample in each resident type

Resident Type	% of sample
Social Renters	44%
Owners: Privately Managed	22%
Private Renters	18%
Owners: with self-reported cladding issues	11%
Owners: Managed by social landlords	5%

To note, this approach to quantifying the segmentation involved drawing on key themes from the qualitative segmentation to determine survey questions / variables that were used to allocate respondents to each type. However, not all responses could be matched to a resident type<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Self-reported flammable cladding issues was found among other tenure types (social and private renters) but this did not have such a significant effect on resident attitudes and behaviours due to lower levels of engagement with their building. Among owner occupiers, reported flammable cladding issues were so significant that they superseded other factors like building management structures in shaping residents' attitudes towards building safety.

<sup>8</sup> Shared ownership category is included across the owners' categories. Depending on the question reported, the proportion of residents excluded from this classification could be up to 33%. All figures reported using resident types are unweighted figures. They are included to provide an indication of the variation by the key themes of tenancy, building management, satisfaction with building and building management and, for owners, if they report having cladding or not. Figures for resident types in this report should be treated as survey sample proportion and indication of scale and not representative of wider high-rise building population. Further details of how these resident types were derived can be found in the Annex E included in the technical report.

## What 'building safety' means to residents

Residents' understanding of building safety was explored during the qualitative research study. 'Building safety' was spontaneously interpreted as feeling safe on a day-to-day basis from security or health threats in a building. This included crime and theft, personal threat from other residents, anti-social behaviour, broken facilities (such as lifts or door entry systems), general building conditions (such as leaks or damp), and functioning utilities (such as hot water or heating).

Qualitative findings showed that the issues of 'building safety', that are defined in the Building Safety Act, were not top-of-mind for most residents, compared to other perceived safety and security risks. Most residents had little direct experience of fire or structural issues so they tended not to be salient concerns, although they were considered important in general. Residents did not categorise the safety or security issues differently to building safety issues (with only the latter specifically addressed in the Building Safety Act).

When further prompts were used during discussions, residents demonstrated a clearer understanding of fire safety compared to structural safety. Compared with structural issues, residents were more likely to provide examples of instances where they had identified fire safety issues (for example, inappropriate use of barbeques or being aware of flammable cladding on their building). 73% of survey respondents stated that they felt fully or partially responsible for fire safety.

Interviews also highlighted that residents had limited understanding or experience of structural safety issues or their potential impacts. Structural safety was generally considered a technical issue. Participants had limited understanding of how they could play a role in the mitigation of risk in this case. In the survey, 33% stated that they felt fully or partially responsible for structural safety as opposed to 73% stating that they felt fully or partially responsible for fire safety.

Table 2: Residents sense of personal responsibility for building safety<sup>9</sup>

	<b>Fire Safety</b>	<b>Structural Safety</b>
Full responsibility	13%	7%
Partial responsibility	59%	27%
No responsibility at all	15%	54%
Don't know	13%	12%
n	4,828	4,834

Table 3: Personal responsibility for building safety by resident type<sup>10</sup>

	Owners: Privately managed	Owners: Socially managed	Owners: With self- reported cladding issues	Private Renters	Social Renters
<b>Fire safety</b>					
Full or partial responsibility	81%	78%	75%	71%	69%
No responsibility at all	13%	15%	21%	17%	13%
Don't know	6%	8%	5%	13%	19%
n	976	225	532	799	1,963
<b>Structural safety</b>					
Full or partial responsibility	40%	31%	31%	31%	32%
No responsibility at all	53%	58%	63%	57%	50%
Don't know	7%	12%	6%	12%	18%
n	981	224	530	800	1,967

Further exploration of feelings of responsibility for fire and structural safety in qualitative discussions showed that, even when residents did feel responsible for fire or structural safety, their accounts of likely behaviour described in interviews were still shaped by their perceptions of building management, including the extent to which they were also seen to be taking responsibility and their transparency in response to other issues.

Knowledge relating to building safety varied, by safety domain and resident type. Survey results showed that, in the event of an emergency, 42% of residents stated that they knew a lot about what they needed to do, 38% a little, 14% not very much and 6% nothing at all.

<sup>9</sup> B6. How much responsibility do you think you personally have for fire safety in your building? B7. How much responsibility do you think you personally have for maintaining structural safety in your building?

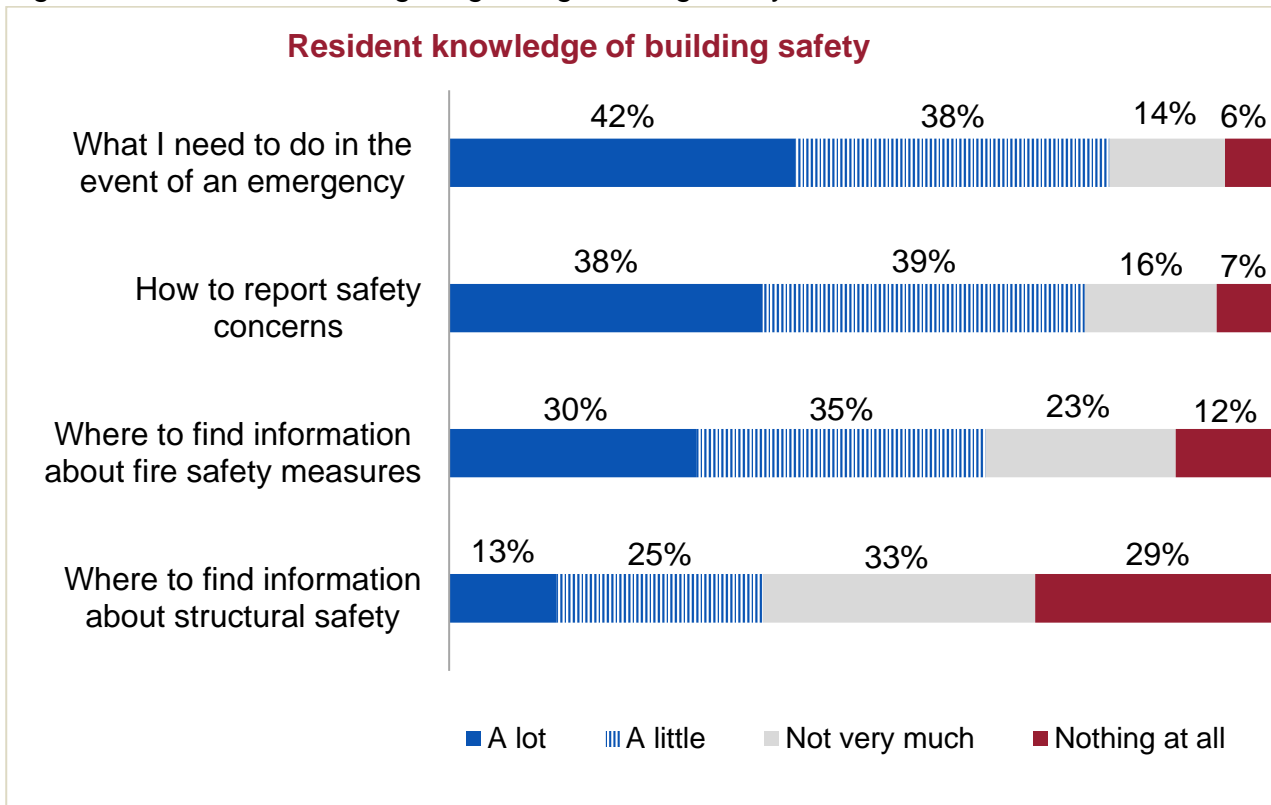
<sup>10</sup> B6. How much responsibility do you think you personally have for fire safety in your building? B7. How much responsibility do you think you personally have for maintaining structural safety in your building? Base: All survey B respondents answering the question and allocated to a resident type. Unweighted data.

Regarding the reporting of safety concerns, 38% of residents stated that they knew a lot about how to do this, 39% a little, 16% not very much and 7% nothing at all.

Residents were generally unsure where to find information on structural issues. 13% stated that they knew a lot about where to find structural safety information, 25% a little, 33% not very much, and 29% nothing at all. However, residents reported greater assurance on where to find information on fire safety. 30% stated that they knew a lot about where to find fire safety information, 35% a little, 23% not very much and 12% nothing at all.

Overall, owners were generally more likely than renters to state that they have knowledge across building safety issues. With owners in privately managed buildings and owners reporting cladding, reporting higher levels of knowledge than owners in buildings managed by social landlords as shown in Table 4.

Figure 4: Resident knowledge regarding building safety<sup>11</sup>



<sup>11</sup> B12. How much, if anything, do you know about each of the following for your building? Base: All survey B respondents answering the question: What I need to do in the event of an emergency (n=4,738), How to report safety concerns (n=4,779), Where to find information about fire safety measures (n=4,725), Where to find information about structural safety (n=4,718).

Table 4: Knowledge of building safety by resident type<sup>12</sup>

% Know a lot	Owners: Privately managed	Owners: With self- reported cladding issues	Owners: Socially managed	Social Renters	Private Renters
What I need to do in the event of an emergency	48%	49%	34%	47%	31%
How to report safety concerns	53%	41%	25%	38%	29%
Where to find information about fire safety measures	39%	31%	19%	31%	24%
Where to find information about structural safety	19%	12%	5%	14%	10%
n (varies for each statement)	965 - 974	530 - 532	219 - 225	1,885 - 1,918	795 - 799

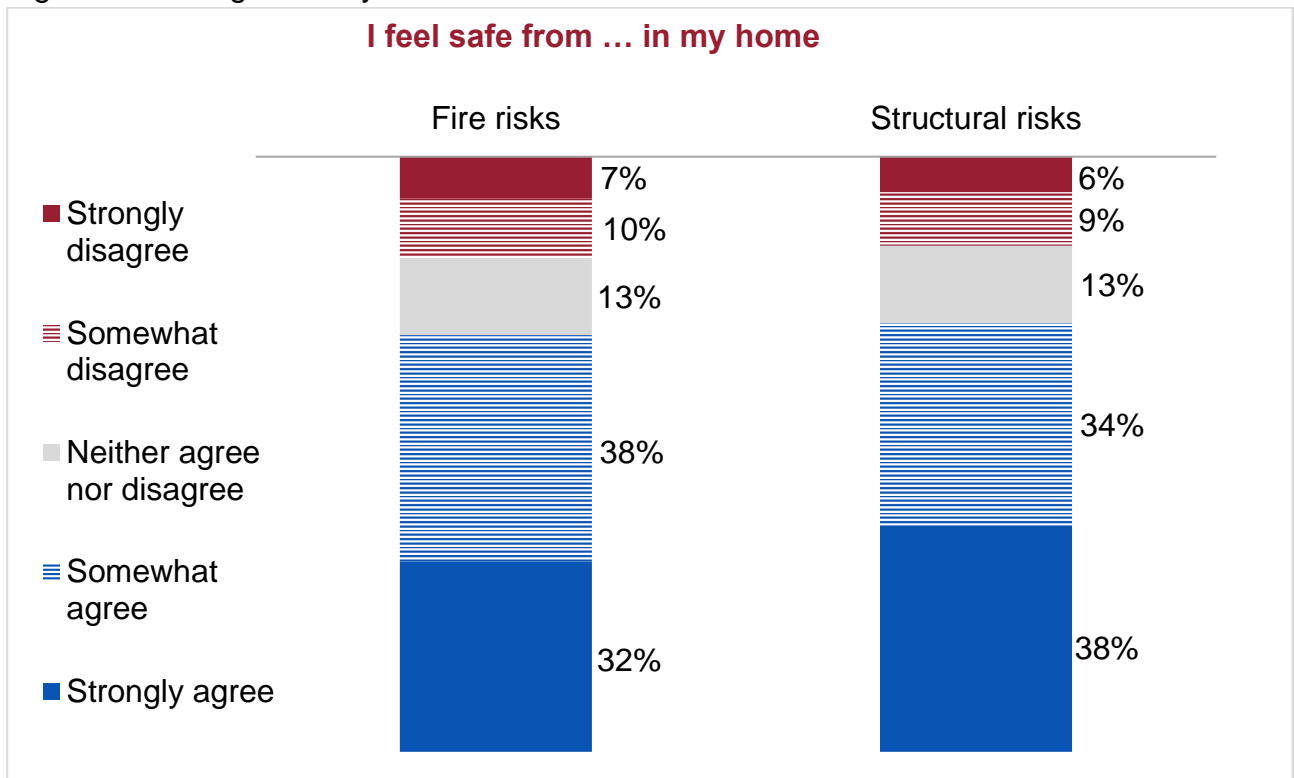
## Residents' perceptions of their safety

In the survey, most high-rise residents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe from fire and structural safety risks (70% and 72% respectively). 17% of residents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they 'feel safe from fire risks in their homes'. 14% of residents disagreed that they 'feel safe from structural risks in their home'.

Social renters who were satisfied with their building and its management, owners living in privately managed buildings, owners living in socially managed buildings and private renters were more likely to report feeling safe than owners living in buildings with cladding and social renters not satisfied with their building and its management as shown in Table 5.

<sup>12</sup> B12. How much, if anything, do you know about each of the following for your building? % Know a lot. Base: All survey B respondents answering the question and allocated to a resident type. Base sizes are provided in the table. Unweighted data.

Figure 5: Feeling of safety<sup>13</sup>



<sup>13</sup> To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? 'I feel safe from fire risks in my home' Base: All survey respondents (9,598), 'I feel safe from structural risks in my home' Base: All survey respondents (9,334).

Table 5: Feeling of safety by resident type<sup>14</sup>

	All residents	Social Renters: Good service	Owners: Privately managed	Owners: Socially managed	Private Renters	Owners: With self-reported cladding issues	Social Renters: Poor service
<b>I feel safe from fire risks in my home</b>							
Strongly agree / agree	70%	83%	82%	73%	72%	50%	39%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	9%	10%	14%	13%	12%	17%
Strongly disagree / disagree	17%	8%	8%	14%	15%	39%	44%
n	9,598	1,075	1,917	426	1,620	1,016	407
<b>I feel safe from structural risks in my home</b>							
Strongly agree / agree	72%	85%	84%	71%	77%	63%	39%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	9%	9%	13%	13%	14%	18%
Strongly disagree / disagree	14%	6%	7%	16%	10%	23%	43%
n	9,334	1,023	1,895	418	1,599	1,007	392

Qualitative research indicated that an awareness of safety measures and belief in their efficacy, supported by good communication, could support residents’ feelings of safety. This included clear communications about fire safety improvements taking place and regular safety checks or drills. Conversely, there was broad consensus that feelings of safety could be undermined where there was little or no clear communication of fire safety information.

The qualitative discussions revealed considerable variation in the reported presence of fire safety measures. Where they were present, they supported feelings of safety, particularly smoke detectors/alarms, fire doors, fire alarms and a known evacuation procedure.

The most salient building safety risk for residents was flammable cladding. The qualitative research highlighted the challenge of differentiating flammable cladding from non-flammable cladding and other building features such as insulation or wooden balconies. In

<sup>14</sup> A6/B10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

the survey, 39% stated that they were not aware whether their building had flammable cladding or not<sup>15</sup>.

During qualitative discussions, those with cladding also spoke of concern about the costs of remediation and the immediate short-term impact on the value or saleability of their property.

## Residents' experiences in raising and resolving issues

51% of survey respondents reported experiencing a building issue within the past 12 months<sup>16</sup>. Owners living in buildings believed to have flammable cladding; social renters who are dissatisfied with the management of their building; and owners living in socially managed buildings were the most likely to have reported any type of building issue in the past 12 months.

Table 6: Experience of building issues in the past 12 months<sup>17</sup>

	All residents	Owners: With self-reported cladding issues	Social Renters: Poor service	Owners: Socially managed	Owners: Privately managed	Private Renters	Social Renters: Good service
Yes	51%	80%	78%	66%	47%	44%	29%
No	43%	18%	15%	28%	49%	48%	64%
Don't know	6%	2%	7%	5%	4%	8%	7%
n	4,704	477	407	193	933	816	1,046

Qualitative feedback from residents highlighted that, while considered important, building safety issues were typically not salient for residents due to their lack of impact on day-to-day experiences and the lower frequency of these issues.

Residents stated that they were more likely to prioritise 'day-to-day' issues in the following order:

<sup>15</sup> A16/B15. Cladding is a covering applied to the outside walls of buildings for energy efficiency or to improve the look of the building. To the best of your knowledge, does your building currently have flammable cladding? Answer options: Yes, and it is being removed or is due to be removed; Yes, and I am unclear when it will be removed; No, it was removed before 2017; No, it was removed after 2017; No, my building has never had flammable cladding; Don't know.

<sup>16</sup> A8. Have you had any issues at all with your building in the past 12 months?

<sup>17</sup> A8. Have you had any issues at all with your building in the past 12 months? Base (Survey A only). Unweighted data for resident types. Total base size for resident types do not match with the base size provided for "All residents". This is due to the exclusions applied to resident types. All resident figure includes all participants who answered this question.

- **Health and / or safety concerns:** Issues perceived to relate to personal security, such as anti-social behaviour or persistent crime, and those perceived to relate to health, such as damp or fungus.
- **Basic utility concerns:** Issues perceived to affect everyday quality of life, such as hot water access, heating, broken lifts, or broken entry systems.
- **Service concerns:** Issues arising from the poor provision of amenities or other services from building management.

Residents said that they would be less likely to report building issues compared to issues with their own flat, as they felt that others were likely to do so (bystander effect) or, in some cases, because they lacked a clear channel for reporting.

The survey data aligns with this qualitative finding. Among residents who had experienced a building issue, 18% said it was fire safety related. Perceived flammable cladding was the most commonly cited fire safety issue. Beyond this, issues were generally about breaches of fire safety regulations by other residents and included use of barbeques on balconies, smoking in the building, or small fires caused by cooking or candles.

Reports of structural issues were less common. 8% of those who had a building issue in the past 12 months said it related to structural safety. These were generally due to building issues leading to other incidents, such as leaks and flooding, or visible cracks in windows and masonry.

Among survey respondents who said they had a fire safety issue in the past 12 months, 76% reported the issue to their landlord, letting agent or building management organisation. 40% of those reporting a fire issue said it was resolved or was still being resolved at the time of the survey. Among those who experienced a structural safety issue, 79% reported this to their landlord, letting agent or building management organisation. 28% of those reporting a structural issue said it was resolved or was still being resolved at the time of the survey.

Table 7: Experience of building safety issues and reporting<sup>18</sup>

	Fire safety issue in the past 12 months	Structural safety issue in the past 12 months
Of all residents...		
Had an issue in the past 12 months	18%	8%
n	4,704	4,704
Of those with an issue...		
Have reported the issue to landlord, letting agent or building management (regardless of current resolution status)	76%	79%
Reported the issue and is being resolved	30%	22%
Reported the issue but has not reached resolution	45%	57%
Have not reported the issue	24%	21%
n	813	372

Qualitative findings indicated that residents made judgements about how well their issue had been handled, based on several factors:

- Ease of access – having clear and available means to contact building management, which were understood by the resident.
- Quality of communication – particularly during the first interaction, making it easy to get in touch, ideally with a person rather than an online system.
- Responsiveness – timely acknowledgement and action, ongoing feedback and continuity of the person providing the response.
- Resolution – in that the issue is eventually satisfactorily resolved.

Survey data showed that residents had mixed views of how easy or difficult it was to raise an issue. 39% said they found it very easy or quite easy to raise an issue in their building. A similar proportion (38%) said they found it very difficult or quite difficult, while 20% said they found it neither easy nor difficult. This varied considerably by resident type, with social renters being the most satisfied with the ease of reporting issues. Owners living in privately managed buildings and private renters also reported more positive than negative views. Owners with cladding, owners living in socially managed buildings and social renters who

<sup>18</sup> A8. Have you had any issues at all with your building in the past 12 months? A9. Were any of these issues you had related to fire safety? A10. Did you report any of the fire safety issues to your landlord/letting agent or building management organisation? A11. Were any of these issues related to the structural safety of your building? A12. Did you report any of the structural safety issues to your landlord/letting agent or building management organisation?

are dissatisfied with the management of their building all found it more difficult to report issues.

Table 8: Ease of reporting building issues to landlords, letting agents or building management<sup>19</sup>

	All residents	Social Renters: Good service	Owners: Privately managed	Private Renters	Owners: With self-reported cladding issues	Owners: Socially managed	Social Renters: Poor service
Very or quite easy	39%	59%	45%	44%	33%	27%	16%
Neither easy nor difficult	20%	23%	17%	22%	18%	21%	20%
Very or quite difficult	38%	14%	36%	31%	47%	50%	63%
Don't know	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%
n	2,311	296	433	358	378	128	316

Amongst all residents, regardless of having had a building safety issue in the past 12 months, 65% were very or quite confident that a problem with fire safety would be resolved effectively. 18% were not very confident, 10% were not at all confident and 7% did not know. Levels of confidence were largely similar for structural safety problems: 59% were very or quite confident the problem would be resolved effectively, 19% were not very confident, 11% were not at all confident, and 10% didn't know.

<sup>19</sup> A13. How easy or difficult was it to raise an issue with your landlord/letting agent or building management organisation?

Table 9: Confidence in effective resolution of building safety issues<sup>20</sup>

	All residents	Owners: Privately managed	Private Renters	Social Renters	Owners: Socially managed	Owners: With self-reported cladding issues
<b>A problem with fire safety</b>						
Very or quite confident	65%	76%	66%	66%	56%	46%
Not very confident	18%	14%	17%	15%	27%	29%
Not at all confident	10%	6%	8%	8%	11%	23%
Don't know	7%	4%	8%	10%	7%	2%
n	4,837	977	801	1,964	227	533
<b>A problem with structural safety</b>						
Very or quite confident	59%	72%	60%	59%	53%	42%
Not very confident	19%	15%	19%	16%	27%	28%
Not at all confident	11%	7%	9%	11%	11%	24%
Don't know	10%	6%	12%	14%	9%	5%
n	4,622	963	797	1,799	223	526

## Residents' views on building safety performance across organisations

In the survey, residents were asked whether specific groups had taken the right actions to ensure fire and structural safety in high-rise buildings since 2017. Overall opinion was divided, though the most common response (approaching a third) was that residents did not know. 30% of residents agreed that building owners and building management organisations have taken the right actions to ensure the safety of high-rise buildings, while 29% disagreed<sup>21</sup> and 28% did not know. Similarly, 31% agreed that the UK government have taken the right actions to ensure the safety of high-rise buildings, while 30% disagreed and 24% did not know.

<sup>20</sup> B8. How confident are you that the following potential issues in your building would be resolved effectively?

<sup>21</sup> This figure is the total for the disagree and strongly disagree options. Due to rounding, combined answer for these categories is 29%

Table 10: Groups taking the right actions to ensure fire and structural safety in high-rise buildings<sup>22</sup>

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
<b>Residents &amp; groups representing residents</b>	27%	24%	14%	4%	4%	27%
<b>Emergency / fire services</b>	23%	26%	14%	4%	4%	29%
<b>Local councils / authorities</b>	14%	21%	15%	9%	13%	28%
<b>UK Government</b>	13%	18%	14%	10%	20%	24%
<b>Building owners &amp; management organisations</b>	12%	18%	14%	10%	18%	28%
<b>Landlords and letting agents</b>	11%	17%	17%	11%	14%	31%
<b>Building designers and construction companies</b>	10%	14%	14%	9%	19%	34%

<sup>22</sup> B18. Since Grenfell (i.e. 2017), to what extent do you agree or disagree that the following groups have taken the right actions to ensure the safety of high-rise buildings?

Base: All survey B respondents answering the question: Resident and groups representing residents (4,660), Emergency/fire services (4,639), Local councils/authorities (4,676), UK Government (4,602), Building owners and organisations (4,580), Landlords and letting agents (4,594), Building designers and construction companies (4,588).

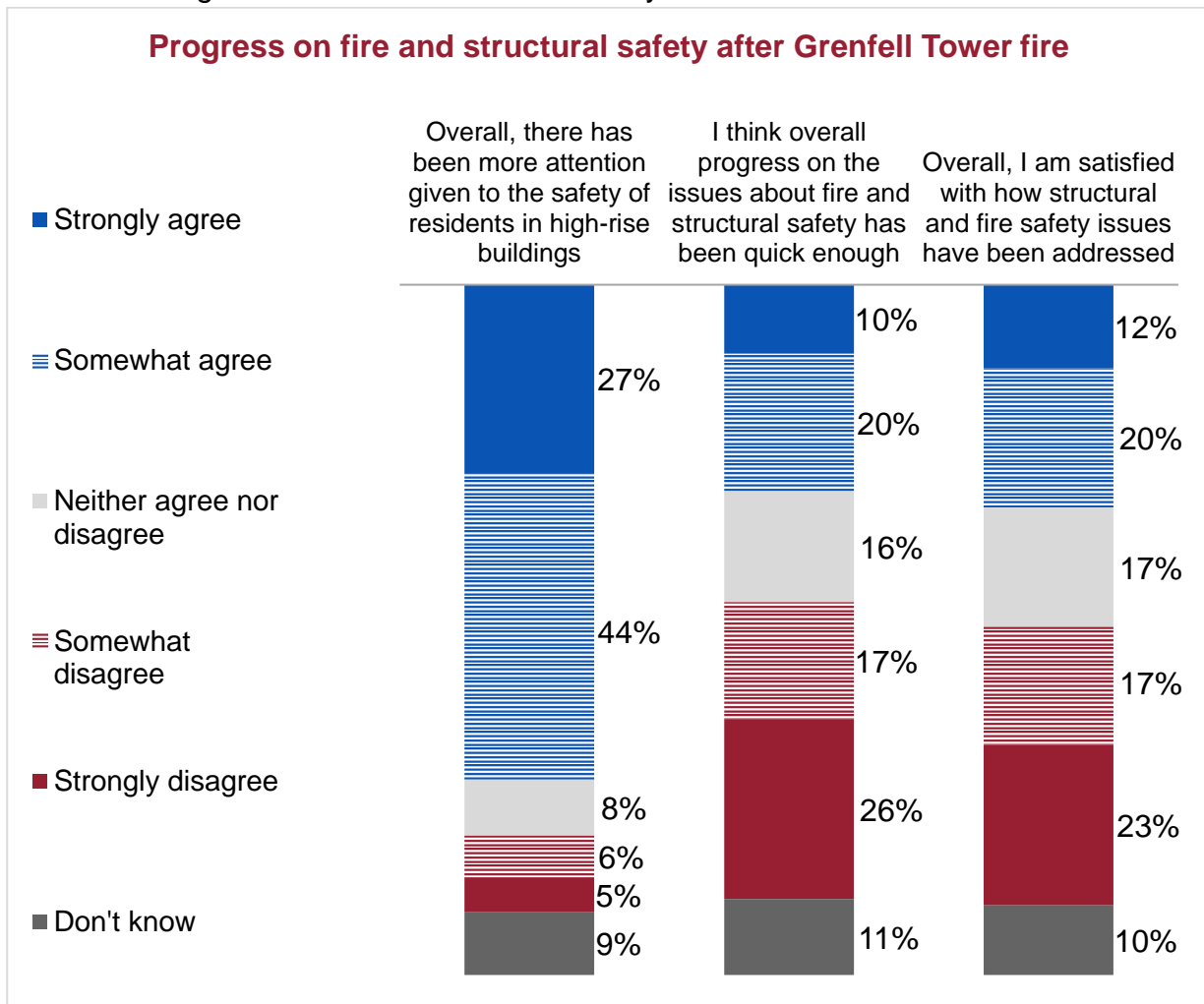
Table 11: Residents' view on UK Government and Building management organisations for taking the right actions to ensure fire and structural safety in high-rise buildings<sup>23</sup>

	All residents	Social Renters	Private Renters	Owners: Privately managed	Owners: Socially managed	Owners: With self-reported cladding issues
<b>UK Government</b>						
<b>Strongly agree</b>	13%	18%	14%	8%	8%	5%
<b>Somewhat agree</b>	18%	18%	21%	20%	16%	15%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	14%	14%	13%	16%	17%	15%
<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	10%	6%	9%	13%	11%	16%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	20%	11%	15%	24%	27%	43%
<b>Don't know</b>	24%	33%	27%	20%	21%	7%
<b>n</b>	4,602	1,793	796	948	220	530
<b>Building owners &amp; management organisations</b>						
<b>Strongly agree</b>	12%	15%	12%	12%	9%	9%
<b>Somewhat agree</b>	18%	16%	18%	21%	18%	16%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	14%	16%	13%	14%	15%	11%
<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	10%	7%	11%	13%	12%	13%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	18%	9%	13%	19%	25%	44%
<b>Don't know</b>	28%	38%	33%	20%	21%	7%
<b>n</b>	4,580	1,761	798	954	221	528

Whilst residents of high-rise buildings felt that more attention had been given to the safety of people living in high-rise buildings since the Grenfell Tower fire (71% agreed), fewer felt that progress on these issues had been quick enough (30% agree) or were satisfied with how issues had been addressed (31% agree).

<sup>23</sup> B18. Since Grenfell (i.e. 2017), to what extent do you agree or disagree that the following groups have taken the right actions to ensure the safety of high-rise buildings?

Table 12: Progress on fire and structural safety after Grenfell Tower fire<sup>24</sup>



## Awareness of and trust in the Building Safety Regulator

During the pilot qualitative interviews and group discussions, residents did not spontaneously mention BSR. There were limited spontaneous mentions of BSR in the main stage qualitative interviews, although those who took part were recruited through the survey, meaning that they already had some awareness of the new regulator.

The survey asked an awareness question that included a brief definition of BSR. 21% of residents reported having heard of BSR and a further 29% stated they thought they had heard of it but were not sure. It is important to note that the results of prompted awareness

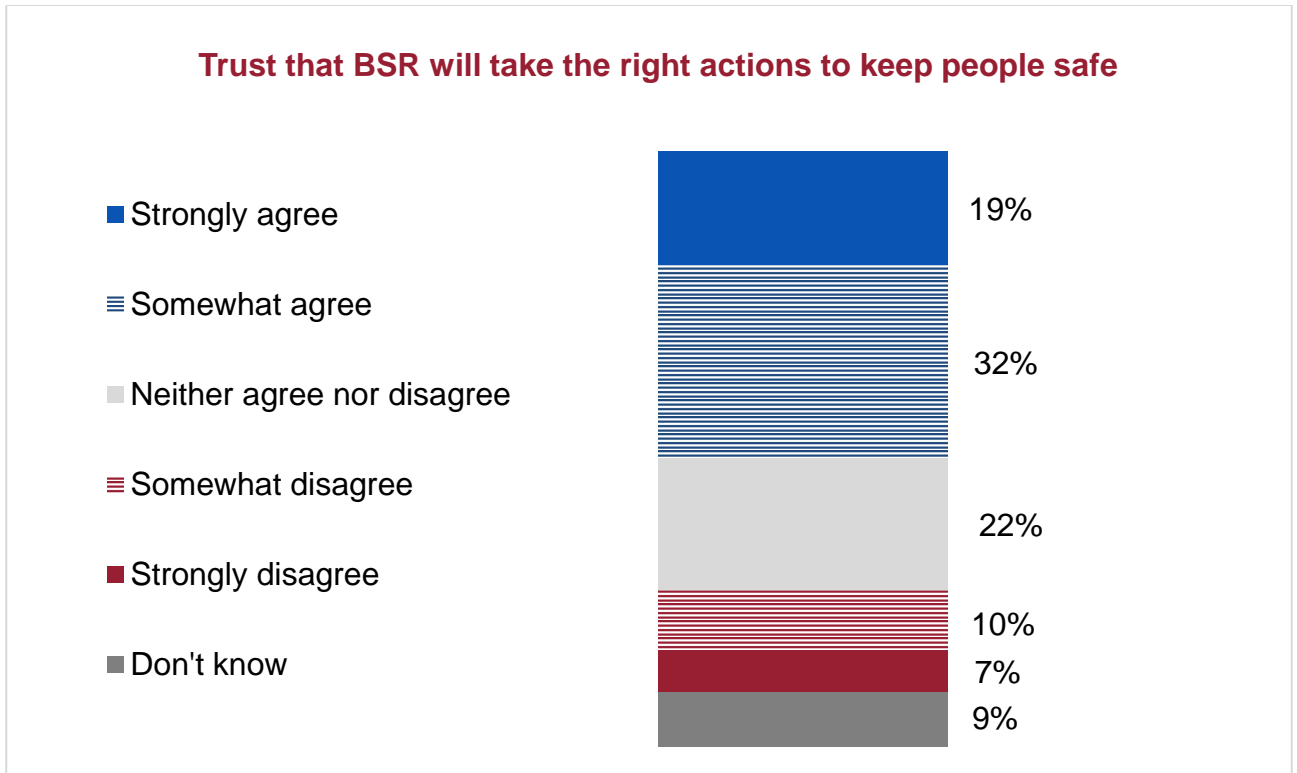
<sup>24</sup> B19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that since Grenfell (i.e. 2017).?

Base: All survey B respondents answering each question: Overall, there has been more attention given to the safety of residents... (4,774), I think overall progress on the issues...(4,719), Overall, I am satisfied with how structural...(4,737).

questions can often overestimate awareness levels; however, they do provide a benchmark to measure change over time.

Despite the regulator not yet being established, around half of survey respondents said that they trusted BSR to take the right actions to keep people safe.

Figure 6: Trust that BSR will keep people safe<sup>25</sup>



## Residents’ views on the role of the Building Safety Regulator

Participants in the qualitative research were presented with and asked to comment on the main proposed activities of BSR:

- **Regulation of building safety at the design, construction and occupation phases:** This was positively received as the most substantial function of the regulator.
- **Processing and managing complaints process:** Most residents were positive about the idea of a contact and escalation process for complaints.

<sup>25</sup> To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? 'I trust the Building Safety Regulator to take the right actions to ensure people are safer in their homes from major fires and structural issues'. Base: All survey respondents (9,296).

- **Building inspections of existing buildings:** Residents felt that inspections had the potential to increase feelings of safety, especially in buildings where they did not already feel safe.
- **Establishing a residents' panel:** The idea of a residents panel was generally well received.

Residents welcomed proposed provisions for a resident engagement strategy, delivered by Accountable Persons and building management:

- **Provision of building safety information:** Residents, especially those who were more engaged in building issues generally, were keen to be provided with more building safety information, in a format designed for non-experts.
- **Development of a safety case:** Residents were positive about the idea of a safety case being developed for their building, although most doubted whether they would want to see detailed information.
- **Consultation on building safety issues:** Many were interested in greater consultation around building safety issues to do with their building, although they felt it would be essential to receive feedback on any issues raised.
- **Clearer process for complaints:** Residents welcomed a clearer complaints process with their building management organisation. There was a desire that this covered a wide profile of concerns, including but not limited to building safety issues.

## Residents' views on new rights and responsibilities

Participants in the qualitative research were presented with their new rights and responsibilities under the new regulatory regime. They were generally positive about the new proposed rights for residents and had some suggestions for how these could best be supported:

- **Receiving information about the safety of their building:** Residents wanted information to be made available in an accessible format (usually online) and structured in a way that was easy to understand.
- **Requesting access to detailed safety information:** Most residents were unsure about what information they might ask for but were still reassured that it was being made available.
- **Involvement in decisions about the safety of their building:** Whilst wanting greater detail on process, there was broad recognition that many residents would not wish to have in-depth, decision-making involvement and were uncertain of how they could contribute meaningfully to this technical topic.

- **Having complaints dealt with quickly and effectively:** Whilst residents were positive about this in theory, many were concerned about how it would work in practice given current experiences of raising issues with building management.

Participants were presented with their proposed responsibilities under BSR:

- Taking reasonable care to prevent fire and structural safety incidents.
- Complying with requests from building owners in relation to building safety.
- Allowing reasonable access to their flat for building safety inspection.
- Raising building safety issues with building management when they occur.

Many saw these as ‘common sense’ and felt that they were fulfilling them already. Some residents raised questions about the consequences if they did not comply with their responsibilities and around what would constitute ‘reasonable access’ to their property.

Further feedback in qualitative discussions highlighted that residents were concerned that there may be financial implications (i.e. increased service charges) of actions that may be required as a result of new regulatory requirements. Some residents believed that additional costs should be covered by building owners or management companies, rather than residents themselves, with others stating that their safety should already be covered within their current costs. Increases in costs were felt to require justification.

Based on the survey data, around a third of residents (34%) reported rent or service charge increases to pay for work on their building to remedy fire and structural issues since 2017. A further 31% said they did not know if their service charges or rent had increased since 2017. Amongst those who said they had seen rent or fees increase to pay for work, 63% reported that this had caused them some financial difficulty.

## Engaging with residents

In the qualitative research, expectations around the appropriate level of engagement between building management organisations and residents varied. All residents wished to be informed about building related updates (nearly all said they wanted the information to be available to them); a smaller group, particular owner-occupiers, wished to be consulted around any changes; and a small minority wished to be actively involved in decision-making.

Residents said that fire safety information was typically included in manuals provided to residents at the point of moving in and/or posted in communal areas like lobbies, hallways, or lifts. However, many residents were not engaging with even basic fire safety information, such as the process for evacuating in case of a fire. This information was said to be included alongside other building related information, where it was perceived to not have its importance stressed and felt to be unengaging. Residents said they were open to receiving more information.

The qualitative research revealed mixed experiences of consultation on decisions affecting fire and structural safety. In the survey, 50% of residents stated that they had been consulted and given a chance to express their views. Among those who were consulted, 72% said they always or sometimes shared their views. Consultation formats varied, though commonly included surveys, votes or being asked to respond to proposals. Qualitative study revealed that, for residents who had taken part in consultations, those who felt they had been listened to and their views taken into account were generally satisfied with the experience. Among those who were not consulted (33% of residents), 82% said that if they had been consulted, they would have liked to give their opinions. However, some residents who took part in qualitative discussions said they did not feel sufficiently informed or knowledgeable to be involved in decision-making processes. A further insight revealed by the qualitative discussions is that residents felt that consultation was more important when there is the possibility of cost implications.

When asked to think about building safety information, residents who took part in qualitative study wanted it to involve:

- More engaging and easy to digest formats – with video content suggested by many.
- Physical demonstrations or fire drills where possible – which many residents were used to from work settings.
- More thorough inductions to prompt engagement with information at the point of moving in.
- Information about the building – including the results of safety checks and actions taken to address any issues.
- Broader information about the types of building safety issues for residents to be aware of, including how to identify issues and how to raise them with building management.
- Information about the complaints procedure and escalation channel.

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